

## Uxbridge Historic Cemetery Committee

The Uxbridge Historic Cemetery Committee (appointed by the Selectmen, May of 1996) is charged with fostering the protection, preservation and appreciation of the community historic burying grounds. There are 35 cemeteries in the town of Uxbridge with four (Prospect Hill, St. Mary's, The Friends, and Richardson Cemetery on South St.) being privately owned and maintained. The remaining 31 cemeteries are abandoned and neglected as defined under MGL c. 114, §1-2 and §18, and these cemeteries are the focus of our restoration and preservation efforts. The committee meets on the third Tuesday of each month at the Cornet John Farnum House, 44 Mendon St. at 7 p.m. Our meeting agenda, minutes and historic cemetery information can be found on our website, [www.uxbridge-ma.gov/HTML/HistoricCemetery.shtml](http://www.uxbridge-ma.gov/HTML/HistoricCemetery.shtml).

On July 12, 2006 the Board of Selectmen voted to accept the Norden/Swedish Cemetery #6 (994 Millville Rd.) located near the Uxbridge/Millville line, as "abandoned and neglected" under MGL c.114, §1-2 and §18. The committee continues its research of the history of this cemetery and has determined that the governing body disbanded and there has been no supervised care since the 1970s. The Secretary of State, Division of Public Record was contacted for assistance in obtaining the records associated with the cemetery. The committee provides maintenance which is paid for through an annual appeal to descendants. The committee has placed flyer boxes at the Norden and Almshouse cemeteries to provide more information for visitors and to encourage donations.

The BJ's Regional Distribution Center on Quaker Highway abuts the Aldrich-Buxton Cemetery #30 (971 Quaker Highway). BJ's, working with the committee, the Massachusetts Historical Commission and the Army Corps of Engineers developed a preservation and maintenance agreement for this historic cemetery. The Public Archaeology Laboratory of Rhode Island marked 35 gravestones and mapped the boundary of the cemetery. The BJ's Distribution Center opened in July and the restoration work at the Aldrich Buxton cemetery began in October. An additional 25 stones were identified. The interior of the cemetery was then mapped, noting the stone locations. A maintenance and protection plan, and cemetery access plan were signed in December. The committee appreciates the commitment of BJ's to care for the Aldrich-Buxton cemetery.

The Evergreen Acres cluster zoning development planned for a tract between King Street and Douglas Pike by Trans Canada (Ocean State Power Co.) was approved and will impact two cemeteries on this property, the Jos. Richardson Cemetery #14 and the fieldstone graves #32. The committee appreciates the cooperative effort working with SITEC engineering to define the cemeteries (with protective buffer zones and access for maintenance), which will also be an attractive addition to the neighborhood.

The Mountain View Estates project, adjacent to the Holbrook Cemetery #35 (52 Albee Rd.) was approved. The committee worked with Heritage Design Group to create a buffer zone around the

cemetery, and a designated right of way to access the cemetery from the proposed road in the development. The committee continues to monitor the gravel removal projects adjacent to two historic cemeteries: Cook Cemetery #7 (220 Quaker Highway) and the Darling Cemetery #5 (Rt. 122).

The documentation of our historic cemeteries continues with the cooperative effort of Researcher/genealogist Lyn Lovell of Milford and committee members Sheryl Romasco, Jill Kenrick and Shelly Merriam. The committee has a draft version and is continuing the historic research for the final survey.

The committee receives no state or local tax dollars and works solely from the limited interest income from five cemetery trust funds, and donations. This year we began an annual appeal letter campaign to increase our general donations toward cemetery summer maintenance. The additional donations allow us to rely less on the interest from the trust funds, so that the funds can grow to provide more stability for future cemetery restoration and caretaking responsibilities.

Twenty of the thirty cemeteries are receiving some seasonal care. The committee currently oversees the summer maintenance of thirteen cemeteries through the lawn mowing services of Chris Cota. His professionalism, generosity, and commitment to the care of the cemeteries, is vital to our success in managing these historic properties. The Buffum Family Association continues to sponsor the care of the Buffum Cemetery #25 (100 Buffum Rd.). We also extend our appreciation to the corporate sponsors of the following cemeteries: Cove Insurance Agency, the George Aldrich Cemetery #16 (22 Glendale Rd.); and Trans Canada Power, the Joseph Richardson Cemetery #14 (off Douglas Pike). Gerald Lemire, the DeWolfe Cemetery #18 (30 Erickson St.).

We thank the many friends, volunteers and abutters who assist in the care and maintenance of the cemeteries including: Albee Cemetery, Frank and Jill Kenrick, Buffum Cemetery, Mary Brundage, and Cody Brundage; Royal Farnum Cemetery, Domingos and Donna Sanchez; Hannah Seagrave Cemetery, Thomas and Janet Patnode; and the Tucker Cemetery, Uxbridge Rod and Gun Club.

We also would like to thank Louis Desruisseaux for donating copies of the historic cemetery research gathered by the late, Henry Roy. His records consisted of drawings of many cemeteries and documentation of the stones. The work was compiled between 1967 and 1987 and has memorialized some stones that are now gone.

A special thank you to Beth Butler and Roy Henry for their commitment to research and to identify and place a flag on the 1,700 graves of our community veterans. We are also grateful for the service of retiring committee member Doris Ostroskey. She has been a valued member in

defining and supporting the care and protection of our historic community burying grounds. Her indexing of the Uxbridge vital statistics while Uxbridge's Town Clerk, has proven to be a valuable resource as we survey the town's cemeteries. We will miss her research and documenting expertise. We welcome our newest member, Jane Snyder.

Shelly Merriam, Chair  
Sheryl Romasco, Secretary  
Mary Brundage  
Beth Butler  
Roy Henry  
Jill Kenrick  
Jane Snyder